

Meeting Notes

Date: December 15, 2020

Subject: Petersen Ranch Mitigation Bank IRT Meeting Notes

Attendees: Shannon Pankratz, USACE

Melissa Scianni, EPA

Janice Gan, CDFW

Tiffany Steinert, Lahontan RWQCB

Nate Bello, WRA

Marlene Tyner-Valencourt, WRA

Meeting Purpose and Goal:

- Review results of the Fifth Annual Monitoring Report for the Petersen Ranch Mitigation Bank, reporting results for Year 4 of performance monitoring at Area E and Year 3 of performance monitoring at Area A;
- Discuss adaptive management efforts at Area A and Area E;
- Discuss outstanding and upcoming administrative amendments and administrative actions; and
- Fulfill IRT meeting requirements to qualify site for Area A Release 3 credit release request, requested for approval in January 2021

Agenda:

- Reporting and Credit Releases
- Performance Standards Overview
- Area A
 - Year 3 Performance Standards Results
 - Adaptive Management
- Area E
 - Year 4 Performance Standards Results
 - Adaptive Management
- Pending Amendments and Administrative Actions
- Open Forum

Meeting Notes

Reporting and Credit Releases

- Release 3 Stipulations – Year 3 delineation
 - USACE stated that verification of Year 3 interim delineation is not required. The results of the interim delineation will be reviewed in concert with the performance monitoring results to flag any issues.

Area A Year 3 Performance Standards Results

Ex. 4 CBI

Area A Rift Valley Adaptive Management

- Flash grazing within Rift Valley wetlands
 - Proposed as a method to control non-native, annual upland grasses that are encroaching on seasonal wetlands within the Rift Valley

- Would entail short-duration, high-intensity grazing under planned and controlled conditions to target grazing of grasses in the spring (~May) when green and lush but before they flower
- Goal is to control grasses to ensure hydrophytic species are not outcompeted, particularly as conditions continue to be dry at the Bank
- This management approach appears to be allowed with IRT approval per the Long-Term Management Plan and Grazing Plan
- IRT Discussion:
 - Question: does conservation easement preclude use of this strategy within the Rift Valley wetland complex?
 - Prohibited use 3c: “Agricultural activity except grazing for vegetation management as specifically provided in the Development Plan, Interim Management Plan, and Long-term Management Plan.”
 - Prohibited Use 3l: “Removing, destroying, or cutting of trees, shrubs, or other vegetation, except as required by law for (i) fire breaks, (ii) maintenance of existing foot trails or roads, or (iii) prevention or treatment of disease; and except for mowing or manual removal of non-native and invasive species as specifically provided in the Development Plan, Interim Management Plan, and Long-term Management Plan.”
 - CDFW supported use of this method, recommended that if we develop a plan that works it be included in the LTMP as a reference; USACE concurred with this recommendation as this will ensure codification of the approach to help maintain continuity of site management as IRT membership changes over time.
 - CDFW wanted to know if this technique, if periodically completed during LTM period, would affect the LTM budget for the site.
 - IRT directed WRA to write up a flash grazing proposal and submit to the IRT for review and email authorization prior to proceeding.

Area E Performance Monitoring Results

Ex. 4 CBI

Ex. 4 CBI

Ex. 4 CBI

Amendments and Administrative Actions

- Area A Release 3 approval timeline
 - WRA and Bank Sponsor are hoping the release can be approved in January 2021
 - USACE and CDFW said they need to review the performance standards attainment more closely before they can process the release and will likely need more time
- Caltrans Sales Agreement BEI Amendment
 - USACE confirmed that this will be Amendment No. 1 as it will be processed ahead of the Newhall Ranch Amendment
 - Tiffany at USACE confirmed that this will proceed via outlined streamlined process
 - CDFW to follow up with Marlene at WRA with any questions or requests for information as-needed
- Newhall Ranch Amendment
 - USACE: Shannon is reviewing Tiffany's comments now, will send comments to the IRT; confirmed this will be Amendment No. 2
 - CDFW: Meeting this Friday 12/18 to discuss staffing and schedule for processing of the amendment
- Devil's Gate Endowment Funding Timing
 - USACE is currently focused on Caltrans amendment and will circle back to this question once the Caltrans amendment is approved
- Area F
 - The Bank Sponsor is interested in exploring if there are additional restoration opportunities at Area F beyond what has already been planned and entitled in the BEI
 - Not proposing to convert currently-functional open water or aquatic resource habitat to wetlands
 - IRT confirmed that any effort to change or add credits to Area F would likely be handled via a bank amendment process rather than a new bank prospectus
 - EPA thought an amendment of this scale might need to go to public notice, but depends on what we ultimately propose to do
 - IRT ultimately determined that a review of the BEI would be warranted to understand what has already been approved, and a larger discussion will be needed.